

My first bootleg wasn't a vinyl record in a blank cover with a stamp on it. Sometime late in 1967, Jerry White played a single of Peter, Paul & Mary doing a new Dylan song, "Too Much of Nothing." And sometime either in January or February, late one night, Bob Fass said, "Something's going on because Flatt and Scruggs have recorded a new Dylan song," and played "Down In The Flood." And all the while "The Mighty Quinn" was a hit on the radio, and one day my brother asked/told me at the same time, "Did you know Mighty Quinn is a Dylan song?" And then the Byrds put out "You Ain't Goin' Nowhere," and Rolling Stone had an article about the great lost Dylan album. And maybe a track appeared here and there late at night on some underground radio show, and I knew I had to have it. And somewhere around Christmas 1968, I was visiting a friend in Philly who said, I know someone who has it. So he called the guy, and I took the underground trolley out to some desolate corner somewhere in West Philly, and rang the doorbell, and gave the guy 25 bucks which was a lot of money at the time, and he came back with a box with a reel to reel tape. And I took it back to New York and it was a tape of a tape of a tape which only made it sound spookier and even though the sound sucked you could still tell something else was going on or maybe as a friend of mine put it years later when the official album came out commenting on "This Wheels On Fire," "His singing is as scary Robert Johnson."

And then I got a slightly better reel to reel tape, and then bootleg records started appearing. And then some time the next decade, other songs appeared. And the decade after that, an old friend came to visit and he had two two-record sets of even more songs including old folk songs, blues songs, country songs, songs by other writers. And then the next decade even more stuff appeared, other takes, and then better quality versions and even better quality versions.

And for 46 years I've searching for this. And things ain't better and I have to have this Jeff. (And things aren't better.) And what's above is only the beginning. :)